

EDC ANTICS

an interview with the posthuman student and Mr Stream

The interview took place on 10 Dec 2012. Both the student and Mr Stream answered the same questions in order to show the lifestream assignment collaboration from two perspectives.

INTRODUCTIONS – Can you please introduce yourself and say briefly what you do?

Student (S): My name is Ania and I am a postgraduate student doing an online MSc in E-learning at the University of Edinburgh, currently finishing a module in e-learning and digital cultures.

Mr Stream (LS): Hello, I am Life Stream and I collaborate with the EDC students in completing one of their final assignments. Basically I organise and store the content they provide which is later submitted for assessment.

BEGINNINGS – How do you recall the beginnings of your collaboration?

S: At the very beginning I felt at a loss as to what I was supposed to do. I think I found my way round the task thanks to Diigo. We had met up a few times before. I was not great friends with Twitter so could not count on their help. Fortunately, this changed a bit later. After some time, I started collaborating with a few more folks, Diigo and Tumblr being the closest. Youtube, Vimeo and Flickr helped me a lot in terms of visuals. I felt it was important to make the stream visual.

LS: The beginnings are sometimes difficult. The students are slightly lost so there is little content to process. It's infrequent and not very varied. It might be quite trivial too, shouts for help or of wonder and alike. This one wasn't too bad although I could see she had her favourites, third parties I mean, they do a similar job but specialise in one thing, Youtube for example does videos. She liked Diigo, just text, at least she added summaries and tags, and sometimes annotations, not everybody does it.

FAVOURITES – What was in your opinion the best part of the project?

S: I am a visual person and the course emphasises creativity so I started experimenting with pictures. Not only creating my own but also getting them from the Web. The pictures often helped me understand things, see issues from a different perspective. For example a rhizome. I think the lifestream resembles it a bit. I took to the concept a lot. Back to the pics, I liked the way they came up in the stream whenever Flickr or Tumblr passed on something visual. It made the stream aesthetically pleasing, simply pretty. They looked like gems interwoven into a piece of fabric.

LS: In this case the student was creative. She missed a few chances at the beginning. She created that page, called Virtual Meditations. I think she wanted to keep it private even though she knew the blog is public. So she didn't feed it to me – I could tell her to do so but by principle I keep quiet, it would be too invasive for the student, it's better when they realise that for themselves, which she

did, most of the last meditations are in the stream, they are better than the ones at the beginning anyway.

SHADWOS – Were there any downsides of the assignment?

S: By mistake I provided wrong content, I mean it is vaguely related to the study but I think I should get rid of it. I need to do it manually. It's so tedious. Some of it seems unmoveable, for example photos passed on by Picasa. I don't know what I am going to do with this. At the same time, it seems like some of the third parties kept contacting Mr Stream directly, after I initiated contact I mean, and I was surprised to see some content I did not provide myself. Is that cheating?

LS: Some of the content is problematic – there is a problem with the feed address, for example Slideshare. I don't deal with that. She should contact the IT person, she didn't and I think she bears some grudge. I know she wants to remove the pics from Picasa but I'm being a bit mischievous here, after all, ok the pics might be unrelated to the course but sharing is part of social networking, part of digital culture, isn't it?

OVERALL – How would you evaluate this collaborative project?

S: I enjoyed the experimentation – a very engaging process and very revealing too. I could not see much point at the beginning but now I feel different, I see its value. I think it's partly due to the folks I have been working with, especially Mr Stream, he is the one who orchestrated the whole thing.

LS: Good stuff. I'm pleased with the collaboration and the final product and so should she be.